

# Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships



Project funded by the Child Care and Head Start Bureaus in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



## What Works Brief Training Kit #12

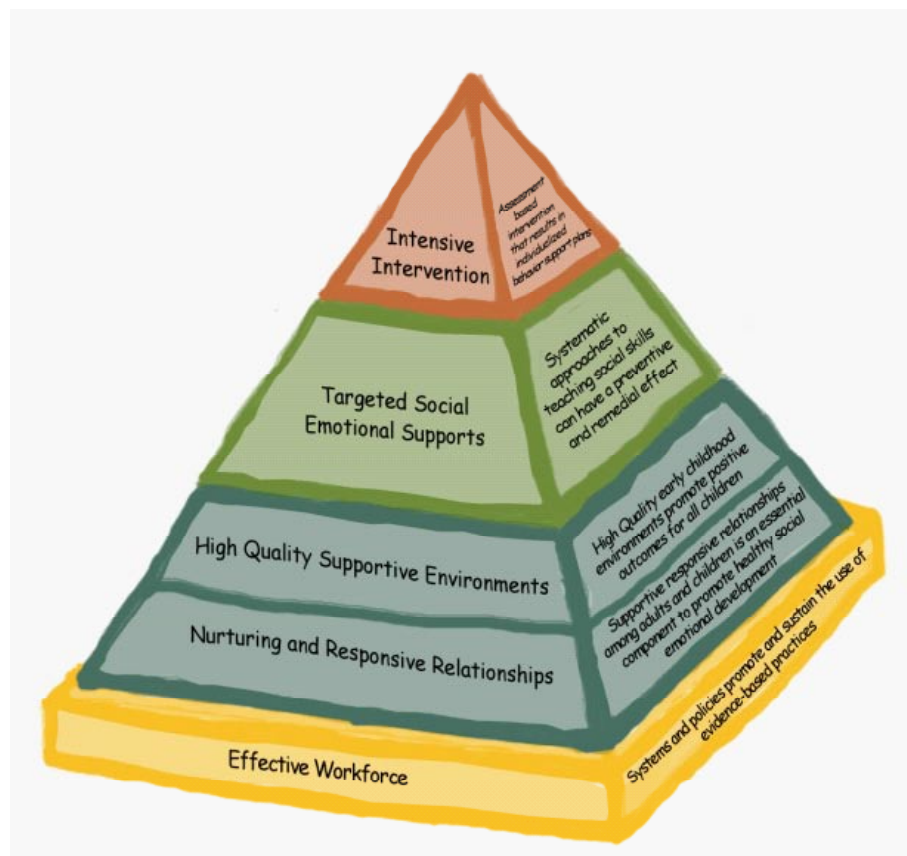


Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/)

July 2008

The **What Works Brief Training Kits** were developed to help in-service and pre-service providers conduct staff development activities. Each kit is based on one *What Works Brief* and contains the following items: presenter's PowerPoint note pages, participant handouts, activity ideas, pre-training survey, demographic form, training evaluation, and training certificate.

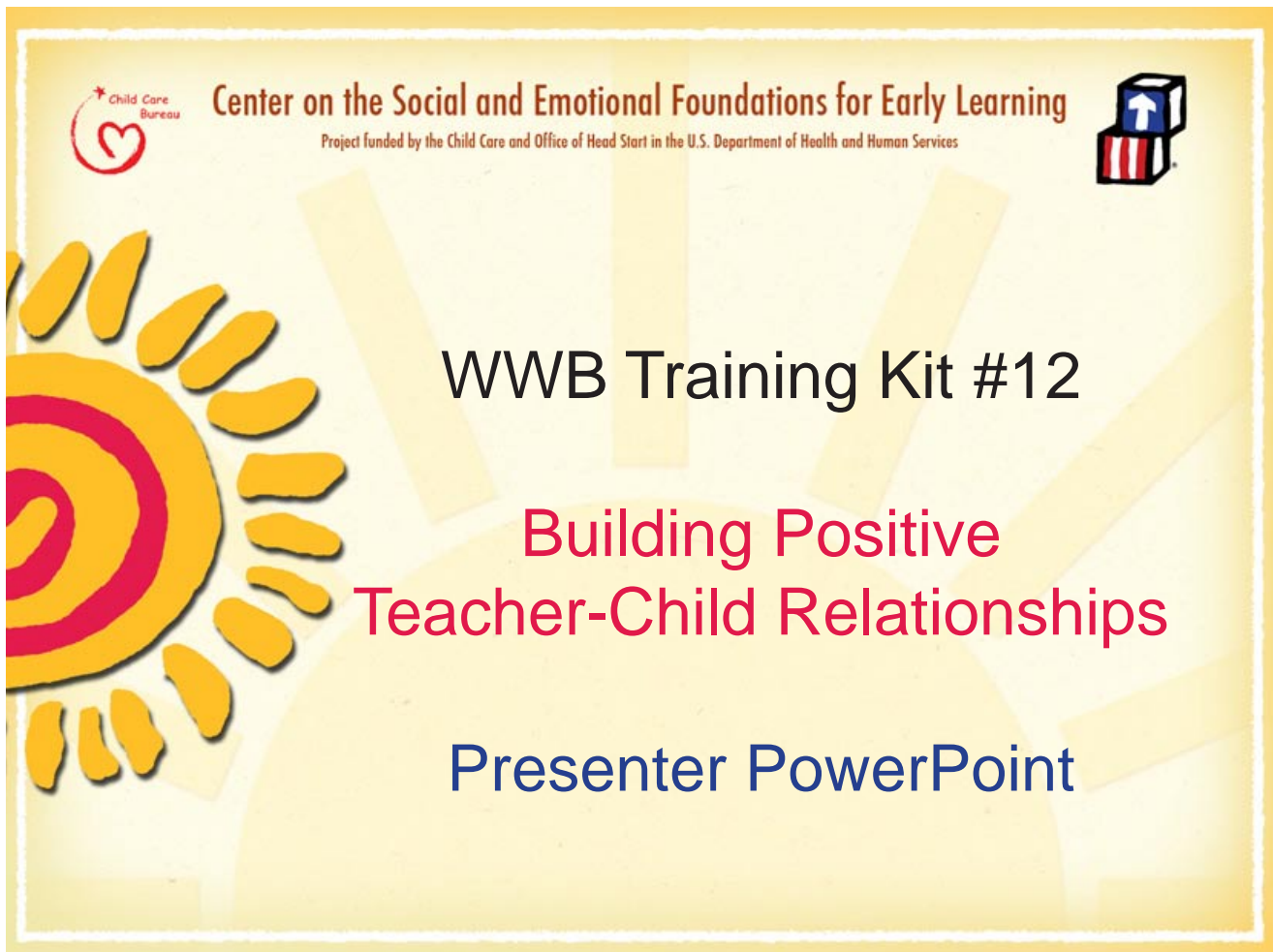
The *What Works Brief Training Kits* are grounded in the Pyramid model depicted below, which provides a framework for describing the four interrelated levels of practice that address the social and emotional development of all children. The Pyramid is designed to guide practitioners in understanding the importance of children's social emotional competence in terms of school readiness and the prevention of challenging behavior. This *What Works Brief Training Kit* relates to the "Nurturing and Responsive Relationships" level of the Pyramid.



We welcome your feedback as you provide professional development activities with these materials.

Special thanks to the Meginnis Endowment at UIUC for funding to help support this effort and to the following individuals who developed the *What Works Brief Training Kits* materials: Micki Ostrosky, Hedda Meadan, Greg Cheatham, Monique Mills, Sallee Beneke, Nancy Gaumer, Amy Hayden, Elenor Rentschler, and Angel Fettig.

## Presenter Notes



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Presenter should be familiar with the content in *What Works Brief #12* and Module 1, Section V on Building Positive Relationships (available at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>). Consider using the *What Works Brief #12* handout as a supplemental resource.
- Welcome participants.
- Take care of any logistics (e.g, length of time for session, break, handouts, etc.).
- Pass out pre-training survey for all participants to complete and turn in, if desired.

## Why Are Positive Teacher-Child Relationships Important?

- They influence success in elementary school.
- They are related to:
  - Good peer interactions
  - Positive relationships with future teachers
  - Lower levels of challenging behaviors
  - Higher levels of competence in school



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

Teacher-child relationships have a long-term impact.

There are 4 positive outcomes:

- Good peer interactions (e.g., positive, respectful)
- Positive relationships with future teachers (e.g., warm, caring, positive, respectful)
- Lower levels of challenging behaviors (e.g., child more likely to be cooperative, follow directions, be respectful)
- Higher levels of competence in school (e.g., child more likely to get along with others, interact well with adults)

# Activity 1

## Greeting Children

### Mary

Most days Mary has a difficult time entering the classroom. She clings to her mother and cries. The teacher often has to stop what she is doing and physically take Mary from her mother's arms. After Mary's mother leaves, Mary often sits in her cubby and watches as others engage in activities within the bustling classroom.



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### *Speaker Notes:*

**Activity #1:** Ask participants to brainstorm some reasons why Mary might be having difficulty joining the group. Ask them to work in pairs to rewrite the scenario to reflect a more positive relationship between the teacher and Mary.

Possible reasons the group might come up with are:

- Mary is new and does not know what to expect when she enters the classroom.
- Mary does not feel welcome in the classroom.
- Mary does not know what areas of the classroom she is allowed to play in.
- Mary does not know how to enter the play of the other children.
- There are language barriers. Mary speaks another language or does not know how to communicate with peers.

# How can teachers develop positive teacher-child relationships?

## Techniques

- One-to-one interactions with children
- Get on child's level, face-to-face
- Use pleasant, calm voice
- Use simple language
- Provide warm, responsive physical contact
- Follow child's lead



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

As you discuss each suggestion for developing positive teacher-child relationships, pause and ask participants to share with their partner a time during their daily classroom routine when the suggested technique would probably be easiest to use and the time when they would like to improve the implementation of the technique. Ask volunteers to share ideas and ask the group to brainstorm possible changes in the daily schedule or routine that might foster increased positive interactions.

# How can teachers develop positive teacher-child relationships?

## More Techniques

- Help children understand classroom expectations
- Redirect to divert from challenging behavior
- Listen to children
- Encourage children to listen to others
- Acknowledge children for their accomplishments and effort



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Discuss ways in which teachers can help children understand classroom expectations. Some examples are:

- Developing a picture calendar for the daily routine
- Modeling correct behavior
- Respecting children
- Encouraging children
- Waiting for children to finish asking questions before answering them
- Teaching children simple ways of handling difficult situations
- Asking children to demonstrate the correct way to handle difficult situations at circle time
- Developing a simple list of class rules

# Developing Relationships with Children

Keep in mind:

- Cultural, linguistic, and individual needs
- Adapt strategies to unique child and family characteristics



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

- Discuss ways in which teachers can respond to the cultural, linguistic, and individual needs of children. For example, the teacher might talk to a child's parents about routines that they use to comfort the child at home.
- Ask participants to share examples from their own experience.



## Challenges to developing positive teacher-child relationships

- Not enough time
- Too many curriculum requirements
- Expectation that children will wait quietly in line
- Noise level in classroom
- Maintenance duties
- Adherence to lesson plans



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

Possible challenges to implementation might be:

- Not enough time, too many curriculum requirements. (Sample suggestion: Develop learning centers that help children meet requirements and can be used independently as you circulate and make individual contact.)
- Expectation that children will wait quietly in line. (Sample suggestion: Eliminate practice of waiting in line when possible. When children must wait in line, try teaching them quiet games that they can play with a partner as they wait.)
- Noise level in classroom. (Sample suggestion: Approach the child before addressing him or her. Get down at child's eye level to avoid raising your voice.)
- Maintenance duties, such as serving and cleaning up snack. (Sample suggestion: Set up a snack station instead of serving whole-group snack.)
- Adherence to lesson plans. (Sample suggestion: Be flexible and responsive where possible. Identify the concepts and skills that must be taught and work them into activities that fit the interest of the child. Recognize that children are more likely to learn if the lesson plan is responsive to their interests.)

## Activity 2

### What Could You Do?

#### Ben

Ben is a 3-year-old who has recently been to the zoo. He crawls around the classroom roaring and pretending to claw at other children. Yesterday he scratched one of the other children on the arm. Ben ignores the teacher's attempts to involve him in the class study of firefighters, even though the teacher has prepared many interesting learning centers and activities.



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#### *Speaker Notes:*

**Activity #2.** (Focus of this activity is on building relationships in a problem situation.)

- First—Ask participants to suggest possible reasons for Ben's behavior.
- Possible reasons that the group might come up with are:
  - Ben likes to pretend, but the teacher has not planned areas in the classroom where he can do that.
  - Ben wants to talk about his trip to the zoo, but he doesn't know how to start the conversation.
  - Ben is interested in the zoo, but there are no materials available in the classroom the he can use in dramatic play.
  - Ben does not know how to play with others.
  - Ben has never been to a fire station and has limited knowledge about firefighters.
- Next—Ask participants to work with a partner to think of ways in which the teacher might interact with Ben in this scenario to build their relationship. (Sample ideas include: Get down on the floor and enter Ben's play. Place zoo animals in the block area and engage Ben in interactive play. Invite Ben to look at a picture book about zoo animals with her. Change the class study to incorporate Ben's interest in zoo animals. Talk to Ben's parents about possible reasons for Ben's behavior.)

## Activity 3

### Gallery of Ideas

Directions: Identify as many ideas as you can that will help teachers to develop positive teacher-child relationships in the following situation or classroom area. Continue brainstorming until you hear the signal. Switch sheets with another group. Write with the same color that you have been using.

- During Arrival Times
- In the Art Area
- During Story Time
- In the Dramatic Play Area
- At Meal or Snack Time
- On the Playground
- At Circle Time



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### *Speaker Notes:*

#### **Activity #3**

- Instruct participants to follow the steps on the PowerPoint slide.
- If time allows, invite participants to share any personal stories with the group. If time is short, participants may share with a partner.
- Once all groups have added ideas to each sheet, have one person from each group read aloud all ideas on the final sheet that is at their table. If possible, type up all lists and email them to participants.

## Remember...

In early childhood settings, each moment that teachers and children interact with one another is an opportunity to develop positive relationships.



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Thank the participants for attending and have them complete the evaluation form, if appropriate.
- Distribute the certificate of attendance if appropriate.

# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #12: Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships

☀️ Why are positive teacher-child relationships important?

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☀️ What are two techniques to develop positive teacher-child relationships?

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☀️ In what ways can cultural diversity impact teacher-child relationships?

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☀️ What are the three most pressing issues you face as an early childhood professional?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #12: Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships

## Demographic Information

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Describe yourself (check the boxes that best describe you):

Your gender:  Female  Male

Your age:  under 30  31 to 40  41 to 50  
 51-60  61 and above

Your ethnicity:  European American  Asian-Pacific  Hispanic  
 African-American  American Indian  Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check your current teaching certificates:

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Special Education
- Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check the one that best describes your education:

- High school or GED
- Some college
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_


Your teaching experience:

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers? \_\_\_\_\_



How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers with IEPs? \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing this survey.

# Participant Notes



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## WWB Training Kit #12

### Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships

### Participant PowerPoint

## Notes

### Why Are Positive Teacher-Child Relationships Important?

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### How can teachers develop positive teacher-child relationships?

#### Techniques

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## How can teachers develop positive teacher-child relationships?

### More Techniques

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## Developing Relationships with Children

### Keep in mind:

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## Challenges to developing positive teacher-child relationships

- Not enough time
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- Noise level in classroom
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## Notes



## Remember...

- In early childhood settings, each moment that teachers and children interact with one another is an opportunity to develop positive relationships.



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## Notes





# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

WWBTK #12: Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships

**Directions:** Identify as many ideas as you can that will help teachers to develop positive teacher-child relationships in the following situation or classroom area. Continue brainstorming until you hear the signal. Switch sheets with another group. Write with the same color that you have been using.

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**During Arrival Times:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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**On the Playground:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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CSEFEL



**At Circle Time:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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CSEFEL



**At Meal or Snack Time:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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CSEFEL



**During Story Time:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.



# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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CSEFEL



***In the Dramatic Play Area:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# Activity 3

## Gallery of Ideas

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CSEFEL



**In the Art Area:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

# CSEFEL Training Workshop Evaluation

WWBTK #12: Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

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☀ Circle the number that best expresses your reaction to each of the following items:

- |                                              |                       |   |   |   |   |                        |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. This topic is important to me.            | (Extremely Important) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Important at All) |
| 2. The amount of information covered was     | (Just Right)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Inadequate)           |
| 3. The information covered was clear.        | (Very Clear)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Vague)                |
| 4. The activities conducted were beneficial. | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 5. The handouts provided were useful.        | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 6. Overall, this presentation was            | (Very Useful)         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Useful)           |

☀ Things I liked about this presentation:

☀ Things I would change about this presentation:

☀ Additional information I would like on this topic:

☀ New things I am going to try as a result of this workshop:

☀ Additional comments:

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## *Certificate of Training* *Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships*

This is to certify that

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successfully completed the above training

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*Trainer*

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*Trainer*



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*Participant*

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*Date and Location*